

122 EAST SEVENTY-SIXTH STREET

My dear Mr. Ginn -
With great pleasure -
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"All productions of this
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author —

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Most Sincerely
Rachel Luthers

March 20 —

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812
18890

"O U R S E L V E S"

IN FOUR ACTS

Rachel Cutlers
550 Park Ave
New York

" O U R S E L V E S "

ACT I

All productions of this play forbidden except by
permission of the author.

812
068890

CHARACTERS

BOB BARRINGTON

COLLIN FORD

LEEVEER

JOSEPH

BEATRICE BARRINGTON

IRENE BARRINGTON

MISS CAREW

WILSON

MOLLY

GIRLS in the Home.

6-29-19 3. Author Ed. The Journal

ACT I

SCENE

The sitting room in a reform home
for girls, in New York.

It is the conventional oblong room
of a New York house with two windows
at left, opening on to street - double
doors at C. back, showing the hall and
stairway - double glass doors at Right
opening into another sitting room and
office. The wall paper and woodwork
show the house to have been once fairly
good but now somewhat going down hill.
The furniture is covered with dull
chintz. The curtains at the windows
are the same over white muslin ones.
Between the windows on a low table is
a large oblong glass case holding gold
fish. In front of the lower window,
an upholstered armchair. Against the
wall at left of C. doors is an old-
fashioned grand piano with a turning
stool before it. The piano is littered
with books and sheet music. At upper
L.C., another armchair. Against wall at
back to R. of C. doors are open book-
shelves built in and filled with non-
descript books, novels, etc. A
long, heavy, old-fashioned walnut table
at R.C. with chairs below and at L. of
it. A cabinet filled with a few plates
and ornaments stand below doors at R.
Before this cabinet, an armchair. The
room is neat, comfortable and unhome-
like, with rather a forlorn air.

TIME

Noon -- a day in February.

AT CURTAIN

FLORENCE and HARRIETTE hurry in from
hall and cross to windows at L.

Florence

(Looking out the window kneeling on armchair)
Pipe the machine. It's as big as a house. Looks at the
chauffeur. Some guy.
(Waving her hand)
Hello, kid.

Hariette

(Standing beside Florence)
Stop that. Somebody'll see you.

Florence

Look at him smile. Say, he's alright. Gee, wouldn't I
like to hop in and take a spin.

Hariette

Listen! The lady's upstairs with Miss Carew. Come on -
everybody's half through dinner. Come on, beat it. If she
catches us up here she'll----
(Moves as if to run)

Florence

You ain't got no nerve at all lately. What's the matter with
you? Bye-bye, cutie!
(Waving her hand out the window)

Hariette

Come on. Come on. They're coming down. I hear 'em.

(They hurry out C. and to R. as MISS CAREW and
BEATRICE come down the stairs)

(Miss Carew is a dignified and very good-looking woman
of about 40 -- rather brusque, practical and kind ---
wears a plain dark cloth gown. Beatrice Harrington is
a tall, distinguished woman of 35 -- very smartly and
simply dressed in street clothes, with furs, etc.)

Miss Carew

Why aren't you down stairs eating your dinner, girls?

Florence and Hariette

We're goin', Miss Carew.
(They exit to R.)

Miss Carew

(Coming into the room)
They've probably been looking out the window at your chauffeur.
(Going towards window)
Yes, I can tell it by the way he's looking in.

Beatrice

(C.)
Really?

Miss Carew

(L. of her)
Something's doing -- every minute.

Beatrice

Tell me, Miss Carew, how do you get your girls? Where do they come from?

Miss Carew

(Coming to C.)
Most of them have been arrested. If the Judge thinks one ought not to be sent to the workhouse or State Reformatory, he commits her to one of the smaller homes like this -- here in New York.

Beatrice

Aren't they glad to be put in such a decent comfortable place?

Miss Carew

Glad? No, of course they're not. Nobody likes to be shut up. You see, Miss Barrington, when a girl's been on the loose in any way, she's free - and when you take away her liberty and her old associates -- the excitement, the companionship -- everything she's used to - and shut her up and try to teach her something else, of course she's bored to death -- bored. Why shouldn't she be?

(Beatrice goes R. and takes off furs, -- sits R. of table up R.)

(Enter MARY and ROSE)

Miss Carew

Mary, are they almost through dinner? Finish the piano now.

(To Rose)

Rose, go on with the books.

Beatrice

And you have classes for them -- in different things?

Miss Carew

Oh yes - sewing, cooking, housekeeping. We try to get them ready for work - so they can take care of themselves. Work is splendid, of course - but they have to have fun, too -- fun, and anything we can offer them is pretty tame stuff after the way they've lived. They're bored ---

(Girls interested)

--- that's the hardest thing we have to fight. -- Rub it hard, Mary. -- I give them as much liberty as I dare - more than they can in the big reformatories, but you have to keep an awfully firm hand on them.

Beatrice

It's the most wonderful thing in the world -- to take a girl, no matter how low she may have fallen, and make her over into a good woman.

Miss Carew

Um -- we don't do that, with all of them by any manner of means. You can't expect miracles.

(Sits L. of table up R.)

Rosie - the window sills. --- The life viciates them, my dear Miss Barrington, through and through. Mind, body, soul, will power - all weakened. It's a long slow hard tussle re-generating a girl, I can tell you. It takes a tremendous personal experience of some kind to make her want to be good for the good's sake. And until that comes, you haven't got her at all.

(Enter CLARA)

This is your day to keep this room in order - look at it now-- look out for the finger marks.

(Clara picks up things in chair down R. and puts things in order. Crash of piano by Mary)

Beatrice

Well, Miss Carew - as I said, I've made up my mind to go into this work, seriously - with my whole heart. It seems to me about the biggest, most worth-while thing a woman can do --

Miss Carew

Yes, that's the way you feel about it -- once it gets hold of you.

Beatrice

And by way of a beginning, what can I do right here -- that's practical?

Miss Carew

We have a lot of dabblers who do more harm than good, you know.

Beatrice

I suppose so.

Miss Carew

But if you want to stick, I advise you to interest yourself in one girl - at first. Keep close to her - get her a job - get fond of her-- understand her. It will open your eyes - educate you more quickly than anything else.

Beatrice

I'd like that. May I see some of the girls?

Miss Carew

Certainly. I allow them to be free absolutely for a little while after dinner. We'll leave them alone a few minutes so they won't be self-conscious. They're coming up from dinner now. You can watch them from my room.

(Voices of girls are heard laughing and talking in the hall outside. Mary exits C.)

(Miss Carew and Beatrice go into room at R.)

(SADIE and STELLA enter from the hall. Sadie is 18 and very pretty. She wears a shabby blue serge dress with a wide white collar. Stella is 30 -- tall, angular and wears glasses - dressed in a shabby black skirt and colored shirt-waist. Sadie is singing a rag-time popular song and goes to the piano to pound out a crude accompaniment)

Stella

Oh, have a heart, lay off that. You can't play.

Sadie

Shut your mouth. Who are you?

(Stella takes some knitting from the table and sitting down R., knits on a wash-cloth, mumbling to herself. (Enter LENA)

Lena

(Coming on from hall and beginning to dance alone. Goes down L., sits)

We got a visitor.

Sadie

What?

Lena

We got a visitor. Pipe the swell big machine outside. Gee - I wish I had it.

Stella
You'll never get that kind of a wagon.

Sadie
Aw! Maybe she will. But I'm right here to tell you, my friend - you'll never have one. You don't look it.

(Lena and Sadie laugh boisterously. DELIA, FLORENCE, MABEL and KITTIE come into the doorway with their arms around each other. They are girls from 14 to 25. Some of them pretty, some of them dull and heavy. Some wearing skirts and shirtwaists - some print dresses and sweaters. Kitty up by table, Mabel on settee L. of door. Delia and Florence come down C.)

Delia
That was a swell dinner Mary cooked to-day, all right -- Gee, them cakes -- why didn't you sneak some out, Flossie?

Florence
Oh, can that boarding school stuff. After snaggin' bank notes all me life, do you want me to start in snippin' cake?

Sadie
(Getting up from piano)
Where's Cutie? Get her to pound the piano.

Florence
She's washing the dishes --- her and Rosie.

Sadie
Hit 'er up, Mabel.
(Knocks paper out of Mabel's hand)

(Mabel goes to piano and plays)

(HARIETTE enters singing ragtime in a loud way with a great deal of swing and spirit. The girls all dance with the exception of Stella, who knits)

(MOLLY comes into the room. She leans against R. side of hall-door - watching the dancers. She is the prettiest of the girls and wears a striped cotton frock, cut a little low at the neck, with a white collar)

(Four more GIRLS come in talking - two of them begin dancing -- the other two take work from the table. One knits, the other is putting a band on a baby skirt)

(They all sing as they dance)

Lena

(Calling out)
Dance, Molly. Come and dance.

Florence

Cut 'er loose, kid.

The Others

Come on - dance, Molly. Get busy.

Molly

Don't want to.

Florence

(Going to her and pulling her away from the door)
Come on. Wake up and do something for a living.

Molly

Go chase yourself -- I don't feel like it. I eat too much.
Take a slant at this.

(She picks up the furs which Beatrice has left on the
chair L. of table and throwing the boa about her neck,
puts her hands in the muff and goes to look at her-
self in the glass)

Kittie

Holy gee! Don't she look swell?

Sadie

Who wouldn't with junk like that on?

Molly

You wouldn't.

(The girls laugh)

Wonder how much they cost?

Florence

Fifty plunks, I bet.

Molly

Go on - you boob, you ain't seen no class -- 500, you mean.

All the Girls

Aw -- go on.

Molly

What's the matter with you? Don't I know the real thing
when I see it? This ain't no near nor next - it's it. Who
is she? Who sports these?

Kittie
The dame with the big machine outside.

Molly
(Going to Kittie)
I should worry! A reformer? Has she come to give us a
heart to heart talk this afternoon? She needn't shoot any
o' that dope off at me.

(She throws the muff at Kittie. Kittie to someone
else - they all reach for it, throwing it back and
forth while Molly swings the boa over her head -- as
the other girls laugh boisterously. The muff falls
and one girl (Sadie) kicks it)

Molly
Stop that! Ain't you got sense?
(Picks up muff)
You never had no furs - you don't know how to treat 'em.

Sadie
You've had so many yourself.

Molly
You bet I have and I'll have plenty more. The nearest
you'll ever come to furs is a box of moth balls.
(Molly puts furs on table. Begins to dance a few
steps. The girls gradually stop to listen. Singing
a common song with a great deal of talent. Molly
throws herself into the dance with abandon. MISS
CAREW and BEATRICE come into the doorway at R. to
watch. When Molly finishes, the girls applaud, and
she goes to the case of gold fish at L.)
Go on Mabel, play something. Hit her up.

(Mabel plays and Molly sings and dances. Sadie
starts to dance alone)

Florence
Go on Sadie, you're grand.

Kittie
She ain't as good as Molly.

Sadie
I don't want to be.
(Mabel stops playing - Sadie stops dancing)
I ain't never speeled in cheap dumps, fer money.

Molly

(Turning)

Good reason why. You couldn't hold the job ten minutes. They'd throw you out. Look at her feet. If I had feet like them, I'd get a shape like a phonograph and lose my record.

(Molly laughs)

Sadie

(Flying at Molly)

What you laughing at? Not at me!

(She strikes Molly)

Molly

(Taking her by the arms and throwing her away)

Aw, you make me sick.

Sadie

You think you're something because your fella isa singer, don't you? I know 'im. He's a low down - dirty ---

Miss Carew

(Going between the girls)

Girls! I'm ashamed of you. I thought I'd let you have a little fun. Pull yourselves together. Sadie -- go down and scrub the kitchen floor.

Sadie

(Quickly)

I will not.

Miss Carew

You will -- and you will do it now. And you'll keep on doing it every time you give way to your temper like this.

Sadie

What are you going to do with her?

(Glaring at Molly. Bus. of Molly advancing. Miss Carew rushes toward Molly)

Miss Carew

I'll see to that.

(There is a pause. Sadie, hesitating, turns sullenly and goes into hall and to R.)

Molly - go into my room - and close the doors.

(Molly goes slowly into the room at R. and closes the doors)

Miss Carew

Harriette, you and Kittie are going to the matinee. It's time for you to get ready. I'll give you the tickets when you come down.

Hariette

Yes ma'am ---

(She goes out and up the stairs)

Kittie

(Going to Miss Carew)

Miss Carew, couldn't Molly go with me instead of Hariette?

Miss Carew

Certainly not. I promised Hariette she could go this afternoon. It's her turn.

Kittie

I don't want to go with her.

Miss Carew

Very well. You can stay at home if you want to -- some one else can go in your place.

Kittie

(Sullenly)

Oh, I'll go.

(She goes out through hall)

Florence

Leave me go, Miss Carew. She don't want to.

(Beatrice comes down R. corner)

Miss Carew

Oh, I think she does.

(As Kittie goes into hall, MARY enters -- a large blonde girl about 22 -- she carries a six months old baby in her arms, wrapped in a pink blanket. Miss Carew goes before chair L. of table -- Beatrice comes down R.)

Mary

She's got a tooth, girls. So help me God, she's got a tooth.

(The girls all crowd around Mary and the baby -- laughing and talking)

Beatrice

(To Miss Carew)

Is that the baby's mother?

Miss Carew
No -- we've got work for the mother now. She isn't here -
but we keep the baby for her in the day time. The girls
love it.

Lettie
(Taking the baby skirt to Miss Carew)
I don't know how to put this here band onto the skirt,
Miss Carew.

Miss Carew
It goes ---

Beatrice
(Advancing and sitting L.C.)
Let me help you.
(She takes off her gloves and going down L., sits
and takes the skirt)
Are you sure this is large enough?

Lettie
I don't know.

Beatrice
Couldn't I measure the baby?

Lettie
Sure. Mary, bring the kid here -- the lady wants to measure
it.

(The girls fall aside and Mary takes the baby to
Beatrice and kneeling before her, holds the baby
up to her)

Beatrice
How pretty it is! Dear, dear little thing!

Mary
She's a peach - ain't she?
(Beatrice measures the band about the baby)

Beatrice
There you are, that's about right.

Mary
(Rising with the baby)
You're going to have a new skirt. You need it - don't
you, kid?
(Goes to Miss Carew, R.C.)

Beatrice

(To Lettie)

And you turn that over -- like this.

Miss Carew

You put too much shortening in your pie crust yesterday.

Mary

I guess I used too much better.

Miss Carew

Don't let it happen again - we have to cut down expenses.

Lettie

(Taking the skirt from Beatrice)

Yes ma'am -- thank you. Come on some of you and take the baby.

Stella

(Rising and going to Mary to take the baby)

I'll take her. Come on, baby.

(She goes out and up the stairs)

Mary

I'm goin' to make a puddin' fer supper, Miss Carew. Can Mabel come and seed the raisins fer me?

Mabel

Sure I will.

Miss Carew

Yes - but wait till the other girls are through in the kitchen.

Mary and Mabel

All right.

(They go out through hall and to R. The rest of the girls follow, talking - some turn to R., some go up the stairs)

Miss Carew

Well, what do you think?

Beatrice

(Still seated L.C? After a pause)

It's the saddest, awfulest thing I ever saw. They're so young.

Miss Carew

Yes -- they're so young and so ignorant. So terribly ignorant. Why they haven't any more realization of what they've done - of what it really means -- than that chair.

(Florence crosses the hall to go upstairs)

Florence, tell Lena to come down here to me please.

Florence

All right, Miss Carew.

(She goes upstairs)

Beatrice

Is it poverty that drives them into this life? What do you think after all your years of experience?

Miss Carew

Well, you know, Miss Barrington, there are plenty of women, respectably married who are bad at heart - so you can't put it all on poverty. But in a broad sense - yes, of course, that's it. That is -- a girl born on Fifth Avenue has a better chance of keeping straight than the one on Avenue A, because she has everything to protect her -- and the other everything to pull her down. Wretched homes - ignorant parents -- all that enters into it -- but the reason, back of it all, is that the sex attraction is the strongest thing in the world and if people aren't taught what to do with it they'll go wrong. That's as certain as that water runs down hill. Why these girls aren't all naturally bad by any means. But they want to live. They've got to love somebody -- and if they don't get it the right way they will be the other. That's all. Records show that almost every first fall comes because a girl's been fooled and deceived - then she drifts and then she keeps on - because it's too hard to get out -- once they're in it.

Beatrice

Who's (the one who danced? The one you sent in there?

Miss Carew

That's Molly.

Beatrice

I like her.

Miss Carew

Yes. Everybody likes Molly. That's her trouble. She's a difficult case because she's got so much good in her. She doesn't drink nor steal -- hasn't the drug habit -- and has the biggest heart in the world -- but she's hard to get hold of. One minute you think you've got her and the next you know you haven't touched her.

(Sees Lena)

(Lena speaks with a slight and very pretty German accent)

Come in Lena. This is Miss Barrington. She wants to talk to you a few minutes.

(She goes to R. closing the door)

Beatrice

(After a pause)

Won't you sit down?

(Lena xing and sitting down R. of table slowly - watching Beatrice curiously. There is a painful pause. Beatrice clears her throat. Lena lowers her eyes)

Beatrice

It's awfully cold to-day, isn't it?

Lena

Yes ma'am.

(Another pause)

Beatrice

I scarcely know how to begin. I - I'm interested in you girls ----and I - I came to see if I couldn't help Miss Carew in some way. Get you positions - or something -----

(A pause. Lena looks at Beatrice without speaking)
What would you like to do when you ----you ----leave here?

Lena

(Quite glibly and cheerfully)
Manicuring.

Beatrice

Oh -- do you think that would be a good thing for you to do?

Lena

Sure. It ain't such hard work and you can dress nice.

Beatrice

But wouldn't you rather be in a good home where you'd be protected and do house work?

Lena

Oh, I couldn't do no house-work. It's too lonely. You god shut up all day.

Beatrice

I -----you-----aren't you glad to be here --in this nice place, now?

Lena

Sure.

Beatrice

Miss Carew is a wonderful woman.

Lena

Sure, she's fine.

Beatrice

She's giving you this chance to begin all over again ----and ---
and to ----

Lena

Sure ---she's awful kind but der ain't nothin' to do here. You
get tired.

Beatrice

Would you mind telling me something about yourself? Where
were you born?

Lena

Well ---I was born in Sweden and I came over here when I was
fifteen.

Beatrice

How old are you now?

Lena

Twenty. I come over here alone and I was goin' to my cousin
in Philadelphia an' a man on de train say he give me a good job.
I couldn't speak no English, and I go wid him and he shut me up
in a place.

(She swings her foot, talking glibly)

Beatrice

Good heavens! Why didn't you run away?

Lena

How could I? I fight at first ---but what's the use ----and
you get drugs.

Beatrice

But didn't you keep on trying to get out?

Lena

You can't. Dey take your clothes away. Where would I go?
After while a man took me out and marry me. Den he made
me go on de street.

Beatrice

How could he make you - if you didn't want to?

Lena

Oh, he say if I try to get away he kill me ----and he shoot me in de shoulder to show me.

Beatrice

What?

Lena

Sure - I can show you de marks.

Beatrice

But why didn't you have him arrested then--- for that? That was your chance. You could have had him sent to rpison.

Lena

I didn't know. He say he kill me. I tell a policeman one day and he laugh at me and say "You better stick to your man". De cops don' do nothin' for a girl.

Beatrice

Surely some of them do. They can't be all bad.

Lena

I don't know. Dere men. Unless a girl pay -----or go wid him -----she gets pinched. Dat's all I know.

Beatrice

(After a helpless sigh)

At least you're here now -----in a good place. You don't want to go back to that life, do you?

Lena

I don' know if Miss Carew can get me a good job. I got to live.

Beatrice

Oh, but my dear girl -----

(Enter MISS CAREW R. coming in from R. king to C. to L. of C. door)

Miss Carew

Have Harriet and Kitty come down yet?

Lena

No ma'am.

Miss Carew

Go up and tell them to hurry please Lena.

(Beatrice rises)

Lena

Sure.

(Rises and goes up C.)

Beatrice

(Advancing a few steps)

I hope I'll see you again. Good-bye.

Lena

Good-bye.

(She goes out and up the stairs slowly)

Miss Carew

Well -----what do you think?

Beatrice

It makes me ill. The despair of it. She reels it off--the
as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world. Oh, why
don't we do something? Why don't we stop it?

(X.L.C.)

Miss Carew

Um! That's what we all say.

Beatrice

Some of them are saved, aren't they?
(Sits L.C.)

Miss Carew

Yes - ~~practically fifty percent~~ are made over absolutely.

Beatrice

Then it is worth while.

Miss Carew

(Standing C.)

Oh yes -----it's worht while - dear lady, we spend an awful lot
of time and money ----millions ----millions----you know - saving
a few girls - and it's like dipping the water out of the ocean
with a spoon so far as getting at the bottom of the thing is con-
cerned.

Beatrice

Why?

Miss Carew

What's the use shutting up a few hundred girls a year, while
the men are running around loose looking for more? Once we
take to locking up man - we'll get somewhere, not before.

You may talk to Molly now.

(Calling)

Molly! Molly!

(Molly enters R.)

Come and entertain Miss Barrington for a few minutes ---while I get the girls started.

(Miss Carew goes up the stairs C. and Molly comes in from R.)

Molly

Hello.

Beatrice

You seem to like to sing. Have you ever had any lessons?

Molly

(R.C.)

No.

Beatrice

Would you like to have some?

Molly

Oh, I don't know.

Beatrice

Why not?

Molly

What's the use?

Beatrice

There's some use in everything that's good. You have a voice. Why not do something with it?

Molly

Go in the chorus you mean.

Beatrice

No, I didn't mean that. To really study so you can sing nicely.

Molly

Oh, I like to sing ----but I wouldn't like to study.

Beatrice

What would you like to do? Come and sit down and tell me.

(Molly sits)

If you could do the thing you want most in all the world --

(Slight pause)

What would it be?

Molly

Get married.

(Beatrice leans back smiling)
 I'm going to be. I got a friend.
 (Begin to speak with a mingling of shyness, defiance
 and natural sweetness.)

Beatrice
 Do you love him?

Molly
 He is my ideal.

Beatrice
 Was he good to you?
 (Molly shrugs her shoulders)
 Are most of the men kind to the girls who work for them?

Molly
 Oh --- you get used to it.

Beatrice
 Why don't the girls live for themselves and save their own money?

Molly
 Oh, you want somebody of your own ----somebody to go home to.

Beatrice
 Do they have any fun---any real pleasure?

Molly
 Sure we do.
 (Whirls half around on stool)
 We have dance halls and restaurants like anybody. Sure we
 have fun. And you get better clothes. I was a swell
 dresser. He always let me keep enough to look swell.

Beatrice
 Did you give him all you made?

Molly
 Sure? You got'a.

Beatrice
 Now listen. A girl as clever as you are can't be fool enough
 to go back to a man who put you on the streets. For goodness
 sake, let me help you. Let me show you what life can be.
 What fun you can have in a decent way. You know what the end
 of the other will be. Don't you?

Molly
 I'll be all right. I'm goin' to marry my friend. He's goin'
 to get work.

Beatrice

But he isn't fit for you to marry. If he were, he wouldn't have -----Listen -----wouldn't you like to feel again as you did when you were an honest girl - when you weren't ashamed of anything?

Molly

Oh, I didn't feel so good then. I didn't have any fun. My mother wasn't straight ----she fooled me. The man she was livin' with wasn't my father at all. ~~See here, I'm not goin' to talk about that.~~ This man'll marry me and I'm going to do it. 'Tain't every man that'll marry a girl off the streets. Do you s'pose I'm goin' to give him up? Not on your life. Miss Carew got me to write a letter and tell him I won't see him for a month and give him that time to get work - but that's all I'll do.

Beatrice

Well, isn't that a good idea.

Molly

Oh -----I don't know. You're a fool to leave a man layin' around loose for a month. I don't see what right they got to put me here. ~~The man wants to marry me.~~ They want me to give up the only human being that really cares whether I live or die. Ain't you goin' to marry somebody?

Beatrice

Yes.

Molly

You bet your life you are. Nobody wants to die an old maid. I got a man that wants me ----wouldn't I be a nice one to throw him down? Ain't I got a right to him?

Beatrice

(Rise)

Yes -- yes, you have. If he's worth such love he'll work for it. Oh Molly - I want to help you. Listen. How would you like to come to my house for a little while?

Molly

Un?

Beatrice

I can give you some ~~money~~ and you can make some money.

Molly

Oh, I -----

(Move to table, back to audience)

Beatrice
I'll ask Miss Carew if she'll let you go.

Molly
Oh -----I don't know if I want to.
(Miss Carew comes down the stairs with Kitty and Harriette)

Miss Carew
Come in girls, I'll get the tickets.
(She xes to R. and goes off R.)

Beatrice
(To Kitty and Harriette)
It's awfully nice for you to go to the play, isn't it?
(Molly sits at table)

Kitty
Yes ma'am. There's a stock company around the corner. The
leadin' man's a peach. He an' Harriette's the only ones
allowed out alone. We been here the longest. She can
trust us.

Beatrice
I see. You surely wouldn't want to run away from a place
as nice as this? Would you?

Molly
Ha!

Kitty
(Winking at Harriette)
Some night.

Harriette
A girl run away last month? In the middle of the night. She
d only been here a day.

Kitty
You can run away easy enough if you want to---^{but} you get the worst
of it if you do. If you get pinched again you get longer
time in a worse place.

Harriette
You bet your life. It don't pay.
(Miss Carew enters R. Gives tickets to Molly. To
Beatrice)

Miss Carew
Will you come in now.

Beatrice
(Yes before them to door R.)
Good-bye girls. I hope you enjoy the play.

Kitty & Harriette
Thank you.

Beatrice
Good-bye.

Kitty & Harriette
Good-bye.
(Beatrice goes in. The manner of the girls at once
changes from restraint to freedom)

Kitty
(As they watch Beatrice out)
She's some swell, ain't she?

Molly
You should worry. She's no cheap skate.

Harriette
Give us the tickets. We'll be late.

Molly
~~Well get on - get on.~~
(Giving her the tickets.)
You think you're damned smart don't you-----walking out like two
little maids from school?

Harriette
Come on, Kitty.

Kitty
Well chase yourself if you're in such a push.
(To Molly. Harriette goes out)
I wish I had something better than this cheap pin to wear.

Molly
(Unfastening her own pin)
Here take mine.

Kitty
Oh -----no.

Molly
Sure thing. Why wouldn't you? A dandy guy give me that.
He was a good spender. Don't you let it get away from you?

Kitty
 Much obliged. I'll freeze to it. Say -- I wish you was
 goin' instead of Harriette.

Molly
 Oh, that's all right, Kid. I'm glad you can go. She won't
 leave me poke my nose outside -- without her.
(Jerking your head towards room at R.)

Kitty
 Are you going to stick?

Molly
 I will till Leever gets a job and then I'll beat it quick.
 So quick you can't see me going.

Kitty
 You know what you'll have to do if he don't work.

Molly
 Oh, Leever can make swell money all right. We're going to
 be buckled up. Do you think I'd shake him for a little wise
 talk? Hear me laugh. What do you think I am? A lily
 blossom?

Harriette
(Coming back excitedly)
 Molly, Molly! Leever's outside.
~~(Molly rises, goes C. and R. and back.)~~
 Down the block. He give me this. What'll I say to 'im?
(She gives Molly a small note)

Molly
(Snatching it and reading it)
 God!! He's waitin' round the corner with a taxi. Tell
 him to wait - I'll be there.

Kitty
 How can you slip it?

Molly
(Glancing at Miss C.)
 I'll beat it now.

(Starts to go up C. Stops sudden at voice of Miss
 Carew)

(Enter MISS CAREW and BEATRICE, R.)

Miss Carew

(Coming in - followed by Beatrice. Molly stops and goes to piano)

Girls -- why on earth don't you go?

Kitty

I started and I came back for my handkerchief. Come on, Harriette.

Harriette

We got'a hurry.
(They rush out)

Miss Carew

(Looking at Molly suspiciously. Molly trying to appear unconcerned. After a pause, in which she looks searchingly at Molly)

Molly, Miss Barrington has just offered to take you in her house -- what do you say?

Molly

When does she want me to go?

Beatrice

Right now -- with me.

Molly

Oh -- I -- it'll take me quite a while to get ready. I'll go to-morrow.

Miss Carew

Nonsense! It won't take you but a few minutes to put your things in your suit case.

Beatrice

I'll wait for you.

(Miss Carew turns to face Beatrice. Molly looks at note in hand. There is a pause -- Molly turns slowly on her heel and goes up the stairs)

Miss Carew

I don't know whether she'll go or not. Mind you, I think you're doing a splendid thing and I appreciate it but at the same time it's rash and if you don't mind my saying so, I think you're rather emotional. She's going to be a handful. Suppose you think it over a day or two till you cool off?

Beatrice

My dear woman, I'm not a child. Here's a girl in a crisis. I can put her in new surroundings -- divert her mind -- help her to forget the man. I know it will be hard, but I expect that.

Miss Carew

But you don't know how hard. She'll fool you in spite of yourself.

(Miss Carew and Beatrice exit R., talking)

(After a moment, Molly sneaks down the stairs - wearing a long grey coat and small close hat. She hesitates a moment at door of stairs, then dashes to L. in hall as SADIE comes in sight of hall. Goes to window, looks out, turns - sees Molly coming downstairs, sneaks to C. door. Gets R. of it, rushes out - grabs Molly by wrist and swings her in room)

Sadie

(Dragging Molly back into the doorway, holding her by the back of the arms, - they speak in low tones)

You will - will you? Going to beat it, was you?

(Molly gives a quick turn and gets loose)

(Calling)

Miss Carew! Miss Carew!

(Miss Carew and Beatrice hurry in from the R.)

Miss Carew

What is the matter?

Sadie

(Hanging on to Molly)

She's tryin' to beat it -- I caught her.

Miss Carew

(The girls begin to struggle. She separates the girls.)

(After a pause)

Go into my room, Sadie.

(Sadie goes out C. upstairs. Beatrice comes down L.C.)

Were you going to run away, Molly?

(Molly doesn't answer)

Answer me. What were you going to do?

Molly

That's my business.

Miss Carew

Be careful. Do you want to go with this lady or not?

Molly

I don't want no charity. I can get out and get a job of my own. I'm sick of this.

Beatrice

Oh, let me speak to her just a moment, please.

Miss Carew

Molly, Molly - this is the chance of your whole life -- surely you've got sense enough to see that.

(She turns to go in R., closing the door)

Beatrice

Did you hate going with me so that you were running away?

Molly

Oh, that ain't it.

Beatrice

What is it, then? -- Something's the matter. What made you do it? Tell me quickly -- before she comes back. Perhaps I can do something for you.

(Molly shuts her mouth firmly and turns away)

Is it the man? Were you going to him?

(Molly looks at her quickly)

Do you want him so much? Tell me -- so I can see what to do. They'll watch you now, more than ever, and you won't be able to get away.

Molly

(After looking at Beatrice keenly)

You won't squeal?

Beatrice

You know I won't.

Molly

My fella's waitin' for me round the corner with a taxi. He's all I've got. I'm much obliged to you - but I got to go. He's waitin' - I can't throw him down. I can't, I won't!

Beatrice

You needn't. If he loves you he'll work for you. You've told him you'd give him a month. Come to me while you're waiting for him. You'll like it better than here. You're caught. Come and try it. What else can you do?

Molly

That's it. What can I do?

Beatrice
You haven't had a fair chance so far, Molly -- but you've got it now.

Molly
Aw -- chance! That's easy enough for you to say. What do you know about it?

Beatrice
I want to help you.

Molly
Then let me go. Oh, please lady. I can't stand this. I want him and I'm goin' to have 'im. I tell you I ain't goin' to give 'im up.

Beatrice
But I don't ask you to. Only that little while with me and then you'll make up your own mind.

Molly
Come on then -- I'll go.

Beatrice
You mean you'll run when we get out the door?

Molly
No --- honest I won't.

Beatrice
Oh yes you will. Why shouldn't you?

Molly
Un?

Beatrice
You'd run because you don't know what I am talking about. It hasn't sunk into you.

(Molly looks at her deeply and turns away)
You've been down all your life -- but you didn't put yourself there. I want to let you see the other side - then if you want to go back, you're free to choose. But it's not fair for you never to see the other side.

Molly
Come on then.

Beatrice

If you run when you get down the steps, I'll scream and raise a crowd. You couldn't get away. Here's Miss Carew. Will you come?

Miss Carew

(Coming in from R.)

Well, Molly, what are you going to do?

Molly

(Relaxing indifferently)

I'm going into society.

(Molly and Beatrice start toward the door. Miss Carew follows them as

CURTAIN FALLS

OURSELVES

ACT II.

ACT II

The living room in the Barrington New York house.

The left side of the room runs obliquely. In the lower half is set a large and handsome fireplace of dark wood, with a leather seat before it. In the side of room are double doors opening into the music room, part of which is seen. Two-thirds of wall at L. taken by a stretch of windows handsomely draped with a window seat. The third of the back wall at left is formed by a jog which comes into the room about six feet and then forms a right angle with a straight wall going on to the hall doors which are wide and set in one at R.U. Below hall doors is a small high table holding a handsome vase. Below jog a long narrow couch with high back - an odd and beautiful piece. Below window at left a long desk table with a chair above and below it. Below window at right, a very large arm chair with high back. Before the fire and well out into the room, a handsome davenport luxuriously upholstered and well filled with pillows. Above this davenport a round table holding a very beautiful lamp - books, magazines, etc. Before the couch a low tea table. Above fireplace a low simple chair. Down stage, a little to L., a long low slender seat back or arms.

The whole has the effect of luxury and good taste with homelike comfort.

TIME:

Afternoon - one month later.

AT CURTAIN:

BEATRICE and IRENE are on at rise seated. Irene has cup of tea in hand. Beatrice pouring for herself

as curtain rises. IRENE BARRINGTON is an ultra-fashionable society woman, good-looking and very smart. She wears an afternoon gown with a hat - one of her gloves has fallen on floor near her chair.

Beatrice

She's been here a month to-day, and in all that time she hasn't mentioned the man's name to me once.

Irene

You don't think for a minute you've changed her any? -- that she's really going to give him up?

Beatrice

She is changed.

Irene

Oh - outside - a little naturally, with all the time and trouble you've spent on her; but not inside - the real girl....

Beatrice

Why do you say that, Irene? Why are you so hard and unfair to her?

Irene

I'm not - only sensible. Two maids have left now because of her. You'll upset the whole house before you get through.

~~(Dialing ten)~~

Beatrice

Wilson says it wasn't Molly's fault they left. Wilson's been with us twenty years and she says Molly's more square and good-natured than anyone who's been in the house all that time. I've told her all about Molly and she says she's worth saving. That's an awful lot for Wilson.

Irene

And what if you should pull her through - save her - as you say? What of it? There are millions more like her and they have to be.

Beatrice

Irene, it's just such talk as that from women like you and me that makes half the trouble.

Irene

Oh come - - -

Beatrice

Of course it is. So long as we accept immorality in men, do you suppose they're going to change?

Irene

Oh hosh! You're getting dotty on the subject. Men are more animal than women and they will live differently - so what are you going to do about it?

Beatrice

That's an awful bromide, Irene. It's a worn out argument. They're only more so than women because from the beginning of time they've over-emphasized and exaggerated that side of their nature. It doesn't have to be.

Irene

(Rises)

Well - even if that's so -

(Beatrice pours more tea for Irene)

I loathe a goody goody man. So do you. All women do. They haven't a grain of magnetism. They aren't the vital men who make the world go round. Let me tell you, dear girl - so long as a man is decent about his affairs a woman can't complain.

Beatrice

(Handing Irene her cup)

That's a high standard to live by, ~~I must say.~~

Irene

It's the one we've got to live by, By Jove!

(Drinks)

Beatrice

Well now, for instance, what would you do if you knew that--- Bob---

Irene

Well -

Beatrice

What would you do - divorce him - or wink at it?

Irene

I've never pried into my husband's life and never will. Of course I know Bob likes women, and they run after him. I almost never drop into the studio without finding a pretty girl there. What of it? I've never even asked about one of his models. Of course an artist has all kinds of girls posing. I don't give it a thought.

Beatrice

What if you had to? What if it were forced upon you as it is on so many women?

(Cigarette from mantel - lights it)

Irene

But it never will be. I know Bob. He'll never do anything common or scandalous.

Beatrice

We think that because he's your husband and my brother -- but according to your code - so long as he doesn't offend you with an open and flagrant affair - it's all right.

Irene

I don't say it's all right. I say it's the way things are. So why eat your heart out about it.

(Sits L. again)

Beatrice

I never used to think about it at all - but now - that I understand the horrors of what we call the social evil - I know that good women are terribly to blame for it all - because of their indifference towards the whole thing. It's we - we ourselves who are responsible for conditions - ourselves. If we don't care - if we don't demand the highest morality in our own men how are we going to get it? or do anything for anybody else?

Irene

Ye gods! You're going to marry Collin Ford. Do you think for a minute he's been a saint all his life?

(Rises, goes C. to bench, picks up muff and goes up above table)

Beatrice

No - I don't suppose he has - but I believe now his life is - just as ~~moral~~ as mine is - I wouldn't marry him if I didn't.

Irene

(Molly appears at C door with a book)

Be careful, here's Molly.

Beatrice

Don't smoke before her, please.

Irene

(Putting down her cigarette on tray or mantel)
It's rather amusing - changing one's habits for her.

Beatrice

And it's rather absurd asking her not to smoke if we do it ourselves.

(MOLLY enters from C.)

Come in, Molly. I'm ready to finish those cards now. The new list is there.

Molly

(Sits L. of table R.)

Yes, Miss Barrington.

(Molly wears a very plain dark blue dress with soft white collars and cuffs. Her hair is smoother than in Act I and her manner more quiet)

Irene

I don't know whether Bob's coming home to dinner or not tonight. I'm dining with the Brices, and then to the opera with them after.

Beatrice

Are you?

Irene

Why don't you come with me now to see those pictures? Bob says they're awfully good.

Beatrice

Can't. Collin's coming at five.

Irene

(Going to door C)

Sorry. O hello Collin - Bee's in here.

(Beatrice rises)

Collin

(Coming in C)

How are you today, Mrs. Bob?

Irene

Fine. I'm trying to get Bee to come and see some pictures Bob's crazy about. Why don't you both come.

Collin

Just as you say Bee. How are you?

Beatrice

Hello dearest. You're early.

(Beatrice kneeling one knee on settee facing Collin)

Collin

Am I? My car's here do you want to go?

Beatrice
I can't - but you take Irene and --

Collin
Oh - getting rid of me, are you?

Irene
Yes she is. Come ~~on~~ with me, Collin.

Collin
(To Beatrice)
Why don't we drop Irene then and go for a little -

Beatrice
I can't really. I have some cards to get off for a lecture.

Irene
Oh nonsense. Molly can surely do that without you.

Beatrice
(Shaking her head at Irene and glancing at Molly whose back is turned)
No -- I have something I - especially want to do - just now.
(Nodding towards Molly)
But I won't be long. Come back in just a little while - please Collin - there's a dear.

Collin
You're neglecting me lately you know. I won't stand it. Come, then, ~~on~~, Irene. I'm turned out.
(He goes out C)

Beatrice
Don't be long.

Collin
(Calling back)
I don't know whether I'll come back or not.
(Goes out C)
(Irene follows him up out of double doors - stops - returns)
(Beatrice sits on sofa sips tea)

Irene
Oh, where's my other glove - there it is. My glove, Molly, my glove!
(Molly looks at her but doesn't move. Irene stares at her - raising her eyebrows)

Beatrice

Molly, give Mrs. Barrington her glove, please?

~~(Beatrice drinks her tea, then places cup on tray - rises.)~~

(After a slight pause, Molly rises reluctantly and crosses slowly to get gloves - taking them to Irene)

Irene

(Taking the gloves)

And pray why shouldn't you move when I ask you to? You're extremely impertinent. Don't let that happen again. I won't have it.

(Molly is about to speak, but closes her lips sullenly)

(Irene goes out)

~~(Molly passes over above table)~~

(Beatrice goes to table, sits)

Beatrice

(Having watched this anxiously)

Will you finish those envelopes now? I want to get all the announcements off for the lecture to-day?

(Beatrice sits at R of desk - Molly at L)

Molly

I don't mind pickin' up her gloves if she'd ask me decent - but I'm not a servant and she needn't think it.

(Sits R of table)

Beatrice

Oh - Mrs. Barrington didn't mean that, Molly. Why shouldn't you pick up her gloves? That's only polite.

Molly

Every time I get to feeling fine somebody comes along and gives me a biff.

Beatrice

Are these all addressed?

(Indicating letters back of desk)

Molly

Yes - all of 'em.

Beatrice

You addressed the others so well. You're improving every day. This is such good practice for you.

Molly

It's a good way to get paralysis too. I thought I couldn't straighten out my fingers yesterday.

Beatrice

Don't hold your pen so tight. Like this -- see?

(Beatrice shows her)

Now, when you've finished these study your spelling lesson and do the shorthand exercises - that's the practical thing for you - rather than the music.

Molly

Oh, I can't waste time doin' things like that singin' teacher wants me to.

(She laughs)

Now honest, Miss Barrington - I ask you - ain't that silly?

(Rising)

Look. She said I must do this to strengthen my diaphragm - Ah - ah - ah. - She did - I'm not stringin' you. Diaphragm! I'd die away doin' that.

Beatrice

But you'd like it if you'd really work.

Molly

~~(Picks up book from floor)~~

I'd like it if I could sing a song right out the way I feel it inside me, and not waste time makin' a noise like a sheep. If I could just let go and make it sound like I feel it -

~~(Putting her hand to her throat)~~

Beatrice

How?

Molly

(Wistfully)

Oh, sweeter than anything - so it makes you forget and just feel happy. Sweet, you know - like somethin' you've kind a dreamed about - but never seen.

Beatrice

That's the sweetness and goodness in your heart that wants to come out. But you have to help it - you have to work for it.

Molly

(Puts book on table L)

What's the good a'workin' so hard fer anythin' - we're a long time dead -- I think we ought to get things awful quick while we're here.

~~(Goes over hands blotter - back to Beatrice, then go around back of table to right of it)~~

Beatrice

You're a funny little girl, Molly - with the biggest heart

in the world. Do you want to do something for me?

Molly

Of course. What?

Beatrice

I wish you'd wear your hair some other way.

Molly

~~(Putting her hands over her hair)~~

Why - what's the matter with it?

Beatrice

Nothing - only it isn't simple enough.

Molly

~~(Saw, of pushing hair back)~~

Oh I know you want me to look like a peeled onion.

Molly

That's just the trouble with you - Miss Barrington - you dress too awful plain. Honest you do. If I had your money I'd look like something.

Beatrice

~~(Laughing)~~

Would you?

Molly

Well I guess yes. Why look at you - not a bit o' jewelry on now. What's the use of havin' pearls and diamonds if you don't flash 'em? Look at Mrs. Bob, she don't mind puttin' on a little paint and lightin' up a little. Why don't you? I think you're awful pretty, Miss Barrington. I didn't at first, but I do now. You kinda grow on a person. It's sort of little things. You ain't flashy but you certainly count when you come in. I'm catchin' on to that. No wonder Mr. Ford's crazy about you.

~~(Molly puts book on table C)~~

Beatrice

You funny child! You've been here a month to-day. Do you know it?

~~(Molly goes up C carrying to table up C. stack of envelopes, with quick sigh)~~

Molly

You bet I know it.

Beatrice
 (Rises - taking gold purse from desk)
 I'm going to give you your salary now.

Molly
 Oh, never mind that.

Beatrice
 Come get it.
 (Giving her three bills)
 There! You've earned it honestly. Doesn't that feel great?

Molly
 (Putting the bills in her stocking)
 It's a shame to take the money.

(Beatrice goes to table, pauses)
 (Molly moves to L.C. putting away money in her belt or sleeves)

Beatrice
 Have you been happy here, Molly?

Molly
 It's a nice place.

Beatrice
 And this is the day we promised you could write to Laever.
 What are you going to say to him?

Molly
 I wrote to him yesterday.

Beatrice
 Oh - Molly!
 (Turns and looks at Molly)

Molly
 Sure I did. Why not? Only one day ahead. I wanted him to get it to-day on the date.

Beatrice
 (Goes to Molly)
 And - what did you say to him?

Molly
 I told him I'd meet him tomorrow and talk it over.

Beatrice
 (Quickly)
 You didn't tell him where you are?

Molly

Yes I did. He wouldn't believe anything if I didn't. I told him where I'd meet him.

Beatrice

But you don't care for him any more, do you? That's all over isn't it?

Molly

You promised me I could see him and talk it over.

Beatrice

(Yes before Molly)

Yes I did. Now listen. I have a great scheme for us. For you and me - and I'll tell you now so you can think it over before you see Leever tomorrow.

Molly

(Suspiciously)

Uh?

Beatrice

Next year I'm going to have a home for girls - in the country. A pretty home - with gardens and a little farm - and there'll be a matron in charge - like Miss Carew - but - this is the important thing. You will be next to the matron - the especial friend and confident of the girls.

Molly

Un?

(Correcting herself)

Yes, Miss Barrington.

Beatrice

I mean you'll make them understand that we want to help them - and show them how to wipe out the bad part of their lives and begin all over.

Molly

Oh I wouldn't have the nerve; they'd give me the laugh too quick.

Beatrice

A girl would believe you if you told her she could make her life sweet and pure - because she'd know you'd gone all through it. I might talk forever and it wouldn't have the slightest effect.

Molly

That's no lie.

Beatrice

The finest, biggest thing you can do with your life shall be to help other girls because of the lesson you've learned yourself. Isn't that so?

(You kneel on floor at side of Beatrice, looking up at her)

Molly

And what will I be doin' all the rest of my days? Don't you expect me to ever see any kind of a man?

Beatrice

Of course.

Molly

Don't you expect me to marry one?

Beatrice

Of course - a good one - and have a home of your own and children that you'll make into good men and women.

Molly

That's takin' awful long chances - waitin' for a good man. I got Leever I'm goin' to marry him.

Beatrice

Oh, Molly - you couldn't go back to him now?

Molly

Why couldn't I?

Beatrice

He couldn't make you happy. You've grown. He isn't your kind; you've changed so.

Oh, I don't know as I have. I promised to wait for him.

(Beatrice raising body)

You got a man. You wouldn't give Mr. Ford up would you?

(Kneels)

Don't you love him fit to die. I've seen you look at him.

I know. When you kiss him could anything make you stop caring?

(Inspired)

That's how I feel. Every woman's got to have a man. What else is there?

(Molly rises on feet)

Leever may not be what you call right - but he's mine.

I'm so crazy to see him I can hardly wait.

(Bee looks at Molly)

But I'll tell you one thing, Miss Barrington - I won't go back to the old life.

Beatrice
Do you mean that, Molly?

Molly
So help me God -

~~(Beatrice overjoyed)~~

I mean it! I'll marry him and stick to him, but that's all.
Don't think I ain't much obliged fer all you've done fer me -
I tell you I just love my little room here. It feels awful
good to go in at night and turn the key, to open my eyes
in the mornin' feelin' fine, and know you're goin' to say
"Good mornin', Molly" like I was somebody. Oh - I'm on to
that end of it all right. I've learned a lot here. This
house is grand but it ain't mine and I don't belong in it.
I'd rather have two rooms o' my own with him. I won't go
back on him. I'm going to meet him tomorrow.

Beatrice
But, Molly!

Wilson
(The housekeeper - a dignified, middle-aged woman,
coming in from C)
Miss Barrington - there's a man here - wants to see Molly.

Beatrice
Who?

Wilson
He says his name's Leever.

Beatrice
What?
(Rises)

Molly
Lever!

Wilson
What shall I do?

Molly
I'll go out to him.

Beatrice
Wait!
(A pause)
Wilson, bring him in here.

Molly
Oh!

Beatrice
(To Wilson)

In here.

~~(gets R. of Mollie)~~

~~(To Molly)~~

I'm glad he came. You've got to see him somewhere - I promised you and I'd much rather it were in here than anywhere else.

~~(Looking intently at Molly)~~

It's all in your own hands now, Molly, and remember it isn't what I say that makes right or wrong. It's your own soul you have to reckon with, you know that.

~~(Exit C and R)~~

~~(Molly primes herself then eagerly looks toward door)~~

Wilson

~~(After a moment, entering)~~

She's in here.

~~(Enter Leever)~~

~~(Exit Wilson)~~

Molly

~~(Advancing to Leever - throwing arms around him)~~

Leever! ~~Leever!~~

~~(Pushes him around him and kisses him)~~

~~(Leever does not reciprocate or show any feeling -~~

~~Molly does all the loving)~~

Leever

Pretty glad to see me, ain't you?

Molly

Yes. Are you workin'?

~~(Beginning to look at him doubtfully)~~

Leever

You bet I am.

Molly

What you doin'?

Leever

I got a fine turn in a show. I was on last week and they're goin' to give me good time. Kiss me agin', kid.

~~(Molly kisses him)~~

I'll make swell money now. You'll be the best dresser on Broadway. You're the only skirt for me. I ain't had no other. Anybody'll tell you that. All the girls and fellas askin' about you. I seen Kitty last night.

Molly

Kitty? Where?

Leever

At Kelly's.

Molly

Did she go back?

Leever

Certainly she did. They didn't kid her with the reform business.

(Molly glances away)

She was dancin' to beat the band last night -- lookin' fine too -- swell clothes. She come over to me and she says "Say Leever - where's Molly?" and I said "Oh, I guess she's shook us and she says "If you see 'er -- tell 'er to take it from me she'd better come back to the gay life and hit 'er up while she can. There ain't nothin' in the other. That's what she said - and Kit's no fool - is she?

Molly

I - wonder what made her - go back.

(Turning to face him)

Did you - did anybody else ask about me?

Leever

They was all askin' about you.

(Getting her hands)

You come down to-night and have a look-in -- to see your old friends. They'll give you a great send off. Come on.

Molly

Oh, I couldn't.

Leever

Why not?

(Pause)

Molly

I'll tell you - Listen Leever - you save your money, and I'll keep on workin' and we can get married in about six months.

Leever

Six months?

(Throws her hands away)

What are you givin' me?

Molly

That ain't so long - if you really want me - right, Leever - We must wait till we can have a little place - maybe a little flat - with a kitchen. I been learnin' how to keep house -- Honest I have -- So we can have a real home.

Leever

(Swings left arm to strike her - say fiercely)
Don't get funny.

Molly

(With a great sweetness and tenderness)
Don't you know what I mean? Why shouldn't we live decent - like other people? We may have kids of our own some day and we don't want 'em to be ashamed of us. We can live straight as well as anybody. You can, Leever. We can wipe it all out and begin again. Honest we can. They all tell you that. It feels great, it does.

Leever

(Swings her down in seat C - stands above her still holding her by wrists)
Oh - dry up! You make me sick. Don't hand me any of that. you're mine - you'll do as I say.

Molly

But, Leever, if you'd just try it once you'd know what I mean. To hold up your head and not be sneakin' like a dog afraid of the cops. Kind of be somebody - get steady work and -

Leever

(~~Puts knee on seat~~)
Don't talk so much about work - you.

Molly

I only mean I know you could be so different.

Leever

You want me different, do you?

Molly

Don't get mad. I want you honest. A girl likes to be proud of her fella -

Leever

(~~Getting knee off seat~~)
What's the matter with me?
(~~Throws her hands down and stands over her~~)
un?

Molly

(~~Her face is three-quarter front~~)
Leever - something comes to you. You see it - after awhile - all you used to think was talk is true. I don't know what gets into you, but - you get to hating yourself so you

can't stand it. You just got to be straight - after you know.

~~(Turning to look at Leever)~~

That's what I want you to see.

Leever

Can that. That's enough - you loonie! Have they been dopin' you with this? What do you think I am? Ain't I waited a month fer you? Do you think you're worth it? Couldn't I get plenty more fer askin'? I've stuck to you and now you try to throw me.

~~(Suspicious - goes to her takes her wrists)~~

~~Have you got another man?~~

~~(Whirls her by wrists to right of him)~~

Have you got another man? Is that it?

Molly

No - no!

Leever

You have too - I know you.

Molly

No! I ain't seen a man. I'm makin' something; I got my own money.

Leever

Hand it over then.

(She takes the money from her belt or sleeve and gives it to him)

Is that all?

Molly

Yes - it is.

Leever

Who is he? A swell?

Molly

(Fiercely)

You shut up. I tell you there ain't no --

Leever

(Putting his hand heavily over her mouth and half pushing her from him then snatching her back by the arm)

Oh ain't there? Where'd you get this then?

Molly

I earned it. I'm workin'.

Leever
(Laughing in a brutal way)
Yes, you did. I know how you work.

Molly
 Oh -
 (Trying to get away)

Leever
 Listen - don't think you can come any funny business on me.
 You know me better than that. You've got more. Cough up.

Molly
 I hope to die if I have.

Leever
 He must be a cheap skate.

Molly
 I tell you there ain't a man. Don't you say that again.

Leever
 Do you think you'd throw me if there wasn't?

Molly
 Oh - don't say that to me. I'm trying to be good, Leever.

Leever
 You'll get out of this now pretty quick.

Molly
(Determined - sits L of table)
 No - I'm going to stay.

Leever
(L of Molly)
 I'll put you back where you belong.

Molly
 I belong here. She trusts me. She's been good to me.

Leever
 If you don't meet me at Kelly's tonight, I'll kill you. ✓

Molly
 No, you won't! I ain't afraid of you now. Get out of here.
 If you ever come near me again - I -

(Enter WILSON C suddenly pushing open double door)

Wilson

What are you doing?

Molly

Put him out! Put him out!

(Wilson rings bell)

(Leever looks at Molly, then slinks out)

(Molly sinks into chair agitated)

Wilson

Well - you've seen him. Do you want him back?

(Molly shudders and covers face with hands on table)

You're all right, Molly. It's the best thing that could have happened to you. You've had a taste of something decent and you've done with the other. Stay here and be a good girl and-

Molly

(throwing out her arms in desperation)

Good! Hell! I can't stay shut up here forever. Holy gee! She don't know how I'm hangin' on to myself. I got a' have some fun. I can't stand this.

Wilson

But think what a fine place this is --

Molly

Oh, I know, I know. It's a big house and she's an angel. But what's going to become of me? I'd a' run away long ago if it hadn't been for you, Mrs. Wilson; she is good - but you're human. You kinda know.

Wilson

Know? I ain't worked with my two hands since I was ten years old, without knowin'.

Molly

I never told her half of it. I got some pride. I never told her there was nine of us living in three rooms. I never told her we had a boarder, an Italian, and my mother tried to throw me in with his board. They thought I would stand for that because I was a kid, but I got wise and got out - found a job - but you can't live on three dollars a week. What was there fer me to do - will you tell me - but what I did do? I'm bad, am I? Well, it's kinda funny that's all. I ain't got much education to see there some-thing wrong. The men are runnin' after us and we get pinched. I was caught. Here I am. I give up my fella. I don't want him, but I want somebody. What am I goin' to do? What am I goin' to do? Stay here and dry up in this straight-jacket of a dress - watchin' the good people dancin' and makin' love for the rest of my life? What am I goin' to do? I'm lonely.

Christ! I'm lonely. I want somebody o' my own.

(She breaks for the first time, and as Wilson touched her Molly throws her arms about her neck and sobs)

Beatrice

(Coming in from C.)

Well!

(Molly goes quickly to the desk and begins straightening letters - Wilson goes to left above door and touches the button which turns on the lights)
(Molly keeps her head down)

Wilson

Tell Miss Barrington about it, Molly.

Molly

You tell 'er.

Wilson

No, no, child - tell her yourself.

(Wilson goes up C. but does not close door)

Beatrice

(Sitting on the low seat C. her back to audience)

What is it Molly? Come here?

Molly

(She goes slowly down to stand before Beatrice)

I'm going to give him up.

Beatrice

What?

Molly

I'm done with Leever. That's all.

Beatrice

(Reaching for one of Molly's hands)

Oh Molly! My dear girl! I - I can't tell you how glad I am. You've taken your first big step - and you did it yourself?

(Molly stares before her with a half wistful, half sullen face)

Yourself! That's what counts. Oh Molly, I'm so glad - I'm proud of you --

(She shakes Molly's hand and turns her toward her)

Proud of you.

Molly

There's a hair pin comin' out.

(Molly puts it in)

Beatrice
Thank you. Aren't you happy, Molly?

Molly
(Smiling bravely)
I guess so.

Beatrice
Don't you feel like a new girl?

Molly
I s'pose I do.

Beatrice
Wouldn't you and Wilson like to go to the theatre tonight and see something funny?

Molly
Whatever you say.

Beatrice
Couldn't you and she have a jolly time?

Molly
I expect I'd laugh myself to death if I went with Wilson-she's such a cut up. If anybody was to ask me who I'd keep on goin' with for the rest of my life of course I'd say Wilson.

(Runs out C.)

(Beatrice sits, staring before her thoughtfully)

(COLLIN comes down to her side, slightly startles her)

Beatrice
Oh Collin. I have something wonderful to tell you.

Collin
About your hobby? I'm getting jealous of it. You don't think of anything else now.

Beatrice
(Hands on his arm)
Nonsense! Don't you expect me to ever think about anything on earth but you?

Collin
No!

Beatrice
Don't be silly. Now listen, dear, seriously. Will you?

Collin
I suppose I must.

Beatrice

I don't want you just to be tolerant and good natured about my work. I want you to believe in it. Use your influence and power. To strike at the thing which destroys more people and happiness than anything else in the world?

Collin

(Reaches across playfully, tips her left arm with his right hand)

Oh my dear, I want you to use your power and influence.

(She xs down to L.)

All we can do is to openly and honestly acknowledge certain necessities and make conditions as clean and decent as possible. But that has nothing to do with the moral end of it that you are trying to take hold of. And it isn't a woman's job. It only makes you unhappy finding out disagreeable things. I can't bear to have you touch it.

Beatrice

Nonsense!

(Advancing to him, placing hands on his arm)

It's good for me. I care more for humanity - feel more - love you more - understand life as I never did until I began to know the truth.

Collin

Why should you see anything but the beauty of life?

Beatrice

Listen, please.

(Sits on low stool)

When I saw Molly trying to find love - hanging on in her loyal ignorant way to what she had -- when I saw how she could cling to that awful creature because he was hers -- I wanted to teach her the right way - I couldn't wait to snatch her up and bring her here.

Collin

What?

Beatrice

Yes. I thought of this huge house and the few people in it.

Collin

(Rising)

She's not -- you didn't --

Beatrice

(Rise)

Yes she is, and yes I did. And she was worth it. She's proven it to-day.

Collin
You didn't get her there - one of those?

Beatrice
I did.

Collin
Bee - are you out of your senses?

Beatrice)
Not at all. What did you say?)

Collin) Together
You are. Why I never dreamed-)
I beg your pardon.)

Beatrice
(Going C.)
I did it. It's done and it worked.
(Go C.)

Collin
You can't --

Beatrice
I can. To-day she gave up her man - herself - voluntarily -
because in one month - in decent surroundings--
(Collin and Beatrice speaking together)

Collin
(Go to Bee)
But this is impossible. It's dangerous having her here --

Beatrice
Why? Why is it?

Collin
You don't know what she might do. You mustn't keep her.

Beatrice
I wouldn't send her away now for the world. If something
new hasn't come into her soul today then I don't know any-
thing -- and it's my business to protect her - to keep every-
thing away from her that might hurt her or drag her back.

Irene
(Coming in from C. in time to hear Beatrice's last words)
(Collin leaves bench C. and strolls down to L. corner)
Well, still at it, I see. Positively Beatrice has only
one topic of conversation nowadays. What do you think of her
protege, Collin?

(Back of settee L.)

Collin

Oh, I think the whole thing is so removed from good women that it's horrible for them to go looking for it.

Irene

Just what I say. Why drag it under our noses when it isn't necessary?

(Beatrice sits at table R.)

Why go out of our way to dig up tragedies?

(Go to C.)

Collin

Oh Bee dear, you'll - well, I think the best way for you to get over this is to get your fill of it - and once you do, you'll settle back into the sensible way of looking at things.

Irene

(Coming to Collier down L.)

What time is it, Collin?

(Irene sits on settee)

Collin

(Looking at his watch)

Just six.

(After a moment, BOB BARRINGTON comes in C.)

Bob

Hello everybody.

(Bob Barrington is 37, good looking, with a light and charming manner and altogether likeable personality comes down back of sofa and shakes hands with Irene playfully)

Collin

How are you, Bob?

Bob

How are you Ford? Hello, wifie.

(Leaning over couch to kiss Irene's cheek)

What's the matter, Bee? Anybody had a row?

Beatrice

Oh - no.

(Rise, Xs off L.)

(Goes in L. and playing a few bars begins a very beautiful love song...singing with great feeling)

Irene
I went in to see the pictures, Bob.

Bob
Oh! What did you think of them?

Irene
Pretty good.

Bob
Pretty good? They're corking.
(Irene rises and prims)
Wish I had half his go. He's a young fellow, Ford - needs a boost. There are one or two things you'd like.

Collin
Yes, I know.
(Irene rises from settee)

Collin
Irene, you ought to be painted in that gown. You're looking particularly stunning to-day.

Irene
You're a nice man.
(Collin goes off L.)

Irene
(going C.)
Are you dining at home, Bob?

Bob
Why?
(Collin wanders up and off into room L.)

Irene
I'm going to the Brices and to the opera with them. Will you come in later?

Bob
Um - perhaps I will. I think I'll get Susan Hoyt to go to dinner with me. You must meet her, Irene. She's a peach!

Irene
Oh, you're always mad about somebody, Bob. I must fly.
(Exit Irene)
(Enter JOSEPH who goes down for tray and up to table up C. looks at letters; turns out lights)

Bob
Bye-bye - hope you have a good time.

(He whistles what Beatrice is singing and goes in R.)

(After a moment, MOLLY comes through the room at back and down to desk, switches on lights. Begins to straighten papers. The music attracts her and she is gradually affected by it. Leaving the desk - she listens - beginning to hum and dance a little. She goes on with more abandon. BOB comes in from right, starts across the room, stopping to look at Molly as she dances. She suddenly faces him and stops)

Bob
Do you like to dance, Molly?

Molly
I used to.

Bob
You haven't stopped dancing forever have you?

Molly
Looks kind a' like it.

Bob
What do you do all day here?

Molly
Well - I address a good many envelopes.

Bob
That's important.

Molly
Yes - there's so many things your sister has to let people know about?

Bob
(Laughing)
For instance? What's that?

Molly
(Reading invitation)
This is to tell that Dr. Von Flexner is going to talk about the moral responsibility of the individual toward society.

Bob
(Laughing)
What do you think is the most important thing in the world?

Molly
Oh - just to be happy.

Bob
 Poor little girl. You're too damned pretty to be shut up
 here.

~~Kisses her~~

(He catches her in his arms. Molly
 amazed struggles to get away. He kisses
 her & strolls out carelessly - leaving
 Molly horrified as the curtain falls

CURTAIN

"OURSELVES."

ACT III.

A C T I I I .

TIME:-

A month later. April.

SCENE:-

Same as Act II.

The furniture is covered with pale
chintz covers. The fireplace has
growing plants and ferns. A tall
tropical plant stands on the hearth.
There are flowers and blooming plants
on the tables. The heavy curtains
at window are replaced by light ones.
The windows are open and the curtains
blown lightly. Stage empty at rise.

DISCOVERED:-

MOLLY is just coming in from room at
L. carrying a tray with coffee service.
Her hair is more simply and becomingly
dressed. There is a new sweetness
and softness in her face and manner.
BOB and COLLIN enter up R.C. BOB
enters first - half smiles at Molly
who is at side of table down L. -
standing with her back to audience.
Collin then enters. Collin gets
cup of coffee and moves up toward
door L. Molly has moved toward
Bob who is lighting a cigarette. Bob
shakes head annoyed. Collin has
turned at door and sees this - then
exits L.

Bus. of glances between Bob and
Molly.

Molly
The ladies are having their coffee in there!
(In front of table)

Collin
(Coming down to table)
Give me a cup, please.

Molly
(Holds the tray as Collin pours the coffee)
 Will you have some, Mr. Barrington?

Bob
(Turning to window)
 No, thank you.
(Lights cigarette)

(Collin goes to door R. and turns - seeing that Bob and Molly have exchanged glances. Molly stops guiltily. Collin looking suspiciously from one to the other, goes in slowly --- closing the door. After Collin looks back Molly comes down to R. front of desk)

Bob
 Be careful. Don't look at me when anybody's in the room.
(She stands close to him, lifting her face - he kisses her quickly)

Stand over there!
(Moves to other side of table)
 Listen. You have to leave here.

Molly
 Oh ----

Bob
 Right away.

Molly
 What do you -----

Bob
 Be at the studio to-night and I'll - I'll see what to do - where you can go. I can't have you here.
(Picks up newspaper)

Molly
 Why not?

Bob
 I don't like it. It's too messy. You mean it's wrong.
 Get away to-morrow.

Molly
 How can I?

Bob
 Make some excuse!

But she'll -- what can I say to your sister?

Molly

There's a dear girl!
the studio to-night!

Bob

Do it as soon as you can.
Will you come?

Be at

Molly

Why - yes - if you think it's wrong for me to be here. I --
I'd ought to have gone away in the first place.

Bob

Sure?

Molly

Yes. You know I will if I promise you. You---you're
not getting rid of me?

Bob

Can't you understand?

Molly

(Springing to him.)
If you do I'll kill myself.
(She clutches him)

Bob

For heaven's sake - be careful. Get away to-morrow. I
won't have you living here - in this house. It can't be.
Don't you understand? It's impossible.
(He takes up a newspaper and sits. Takes the coffee.)
Don't stay in this room.
(Molly crosses to try and is side of table)

Irene

(Coming in from L. wearing a very beautiful evening
gown, which is extremely smart and modish. She
stops suddenly, looking at Molly, who is just taking
the tray from the table)
Why haven't you taken that away?

Molly

(Nervously)
I - I stopped to fix the lamp.
(Molly exits R.)
(Bob rises advances to Irene C. reading a paper)
(Irene stands C. thoughtfully)

Bob

(After a pause)
Will you have a cigarette?

Irene
(Looking after her)
 I loathe that girl. I can't breathe when she's in the room

Bob
 What difference does she make to you? I say, will you have
 a cigarette?
(Going to her with the case open.)

Irene
 No.
(Goes to chair and sits)

Bob
(Trying to be natural)
 Why not?

Irene
 There's a subtle - insidious something that - that ---sort of
 fills the air when she's about. It's a s strong - as real
 as -----
(She stops, still looking at him)

Bob
(Turning his newspaper)
 Why do you let a servant get on your nerves like that?

Irene
 Oh it isn't my nerves - I assure you. Something much more
 definite than that.

Bob
(Offering open case)
 Are you going to have a cigarette or not?

Irene
 I am not. I've taken a peculiar dislike to your cigarettes

Bob
(Crossing to L. corner of desk R. and picks up news-
 paper) Quite peculiar I should say.
 Since when?

Irene
 Yesterday I thought I smelled smoke in the upper hall. I
 followed the scent and it took me into the side hall - down
 to the end - growing stronger---to that girl's door. I went
 in. She was smoking one of yours, with a box on the table.

Bob
Um - I s'pose all the servants pick them up - more or less.
Goes R. of desk *What's up?*

Irene
Nothing - It's ^{just} ~~was~~ one of a hundred little things that have made me -

(Bob yawns)

You do look rather fagged. You might have come in a little more quietly last night - this morning rather. Five - it was. I don't complain of the hour - only the way you shut the door.

Bob
I'm so sorry. That was a slip. I didn't mean to be noisy.

Irene
I'm sure you didn't.

Bob
You're in a pleasant mood. I'm going up.

Irene
Bob!

Bob
Well?
(She puts her hands over her eyes. Checking a sob.)
What's the matter?

Irene
I - don't know. Yes, I do.

Bob
What is it?

Irene
I want to tell you something.

Bob
Well?
(Going back to her. A pause)
Go on. What on earth is the matter with you, Irene? I never saw you act like this.

Irene
(Trying to control herself)
No - you never did.

Bob

Are you ill?

Irene

Oh, Bob - be kind to me. I didn't ----I ----you won't understand just ----all it means. It frightens me a little --- but I'm glad.

Bob

What do you mean?

Irene

I've always said I didn't want a baby but I do now. It's the most wonderful thing in the world.

Bob

(After a pause)

My - dear - girl.

(Starts to take her hand, she starts to put hand on her shoulder)

Irene

Don't - wait! You've always said I was - so - sensible and broad minded about - about men. And I've tried to be But lately I ----I've wanted to say something to you.

Bob

(Lays his hand in hers - she clings to him)

What difference does all that make? You are the most sensible woman --- but now you're the most precious. You -- you've made me - if you're happy about it --- I'm the happiest man on earth.

Irene

Are you?

Bob

(Answers about her - standing above her)

Of course. Of course I am. You needn't ask me that. It's great!

Irene

It's all more wonderful - and more terrible than I thought - Everything in the world is more so -- now.

Bob

Yes, dear.

Irene

More important. Oh Bob, I want to be fit for it --and ---- equal to - all it means. I've been so thoughtless and ---

and wrong about it all - about what ~~married life~~ ought to be.

Bob
You're tired, dear. You're tired. Don't say these things.

Irene
(Suddenly clinging to him)
Oh Bob ---you're so different to me now. You mean something more to me than you ever - I want to know that you are to me --- what -----I've been to you. I never used to care ----but ----

Bob
Irene - why do you say all these foolish things? You know----

Irene
It -----makes a difference to me now ----what you are.

Bob
I know - I know dear ----my dear.
(kisses her head)

Irene
(Suddenly putting her hands on his arms looking into his face)
I want to trust you. I want to -----

Bob
Why shouldn't you?

Irene
(Rising)
Can I?

Bob
Irene, why on earth do you ask me that?

Irene
I've let you alone. I've tried to believe that everything was all right for a man; to look at it from a man's standpoint. But now - my ideas have changed. Bob I can't bear it unless I have faith in you. I want the father of my baby to be -----

Bob
Well dear -----

Irene
Oh my husband!
(Suddenly leaning against him weakly)

I love you in a new way.

~~(Places her face against his before saying the last sentence)~~

Bob - do you love me?

(She hides her face in his arm - sobbing)

Bob

(Suddenly looking at her and places his hands on her arms)

Why of course. Of course I do.

~~(Business. Irene sobs on his shoulder)~~

You know that - you foolish girl. Put all that - if you've got any silly ideas in your head about me - get them out.

Do you hear? You're my wife - the only woman in the world to me. Dear girl you've made me awfully happy. It's

~~great! The greatest thing going - isn't it? I can't tell you how glad I am. It's - it's wonderful. I'll I don't quite realize it yet. And - and - and -~~

(He kisses her hair tenderly, then her face. COLLIN and BEATRICE are heard speaking as they open the door at R.)

Beatrice

(Off scene)

That will do Collin dear.

Irene

I'm going up.

~~(Exit Irene)~~

(She kisses Bob quickly and goes out C.)

(Beatrice comes in from L.2. followed by Collin from R.U.E. She wears a white evening gown - very beautiful and simple.)

Beatrice

What's the matter with Irene?

(Bob xes to R. staring before him doesn't hear, xes to window R. of desk)

Bob, was Irene crying?

(Beatrice goes to Bob, down R. and puts hand on his shoulder)

Bob

Um? Oh no - no - I don't think - no she wasn't!

Collin

(At fireplace laughing)

Wake up - what's the matter with you?

Beatrice

Headache? Headache?

(Goes up and around table X down to Bob)

Bob
 No - no - I'm all right. What are you talking about? Like
 a little Scotch Collin?

Collin
(Sits)
 I could stand it.

Beatrice
 Such an easy way to drown your troubles, isn't it?

Collin
 I wish it were.
(Comes to stool in front of table R. and sits facing Bob)

Beatrice
 Well, it is ----for men. You throw most anything off after
 you've ----

Collin
 If you don't stop taking things so seriously you'll think all
 men are knaves. Since you've been trying to reform the world
 you are -----

Beatrice
 Laugh all you want ----you can't shake me now. I've got Molly
 as a living example that it's all worth while.
(Beatrice puts hand on Bob's arm)

Collin
 Have you noticed this wonderful change in Molly, Bob.

Bob
 Uh?

Collin
(Watching Bob)
 The goodness that's radiating from her presence?

Beatrice
 You can laugh but it's true. Bob probably hasn't realized
 it because he scarcely sees her. But it's there. Why it's
 like a miracle.

(Beatrice goes C.)
 From the very day she gave up the man she's been a different
 girl; From that very day.
(Bob goes to the window and lights another cigarette)

Collin
 I'd like to believe it.

Beatrice
 (Comes back to chair L. of it and sits)
 You have to believe it. It's true. It would break your
 heart to see how well she works. But Bob, the most pitiful
 thing it is to see her try to study. Bob -----
 (Go near chair L. of table)
 Are you listening?

Bob
 Yes. Come on Collin, do you want that drink?

Beatrice
 Wait till I finish. And she pegs away at her spelling as
 if her life depends upon it, reads, reads ---just stuffing it
 in.

Collin
 I'll be there in a minute.
 (Collin lapses into thought)

Beatrice
 What's the matter?

Collin
 Nothing.

Beatrice
 Yes there is. What are you thinking?

Collin
 Nothing. Only -----

Beatrice
 Only what?

Collin
 (Rises and goes to Beatrice)
 How long are you going to keep this girl here?

Beatrice
 Indefinitely.
 (Enter WILSON.)

Collin
 Bee, I tell you you're making a mistake.

Beatrice
 Now Collin.

Wilson
 (Excitedly)

May I speak to you a minute, Miss Barrington? I must.

Beatrice
Right now?

Wilson
Yes, please.
(Beatrice excuses herself to Collin)
(Collin goes out)
(Sits L. of R. table)

Beatrice
What is it?

Wilson
Molly's she's getting ready to go!

Beatrice
Go where?

Wilson
She's packin' her things and says she's goin' to-night ----she says she can't stand it here another minute.

Beatrice
Has there been any more trouble with the maids? I'll go and speak to her --

Wilson
Oh, that isn't it -----That's just an excuse.

Beatrice
What?

Wilson
That isn't the real trouble!

Beatrice
What then?

Wilson
I'm afraid it's the man.

Beatrice
The man?

Wilson
Leavin'----yes - the one she gave up- or we thought she did. I'm afraid she's gone back to him.

Oh no - no - no! Beatrice
How do you know? Don't tell me that. I couldn't bear it.

 Wilson
Well - I caught her about two weeks ago, comin' in awful late one night, and I told her I wouldn't tell you if she never did it again ---and twice since I caught her sneakin' in towards mornin'. I talked to her like anything -----

 Beatrice
Oh, why didn't you tell me? Why didn't -----

 Wilson
She cried and promised if I wouldn't -----

 Beatrice
Oh, horrible! Molly ----Oh, I can't believe it. It can't be true -----it can't!

 Wilson
I'm afraid she'll get away now if you don't ----

 Beatrice
(Rises and starts)
I'll go right up -----

 Wilson
Just a minute -----don't let her know I told you ---she'll shut up like a clam and you won't get any -----

 Beatrice
How can I help it?

 Wilson
Let on you saw her yourself comin' in this morning.

 Beatrice
Oh no, I can't lie to her -----

 Wilson
Make out you know the whole business - that you know it's the man -----and just where she goes -----and the whole thing. Then she'll give it all up. It's the only way you can get the truth out of her.

 Beatrice
I don't like to do it that way!

Wilson
I know her better than you do Miss Barrington and I advise you!

Molly
I beg your pardon Miss Barrington - can I speak to you a minute?

Beatrice
(Motion Wilson to go)
Yes, Molly.
(There is a slight pause ---- Wilson goes out C. closing door)

Molly
I -----

Beatrice
(R. C.)
Well -----

Molly
I don't want you to think I ain't ----I'm not grateful for all you've done for me. I never could thank you enough if I talked forever. It isn't that ---but - I -- I ----I can't stay any longer.

Beatrice
What?

Molly
I'll get a job some place else, but you mustn't think -----

Beatrice
What is the trouble? Why are you -----

Molly
It tain't you, Miss Barrington -----It tain't you. You've been the -----

Beatrice
What is it then?

Molly
It's - another maid's going to leave on my account ---and I'm going to get out first.

Beatrice
(Sternly)
Where are you going?

Molly
(Looking at her quickly)

I -----I -----I'll go back to the home till I -----just for tonight till I get a place. Miss Carew said I could always come back.

(Molly drops her face. Beatrice takes her by arm and leads her down a step)

Beatrice

(Coming close to her)

Molly ---you're lying. I know just why you're going and just where you're going.

Molly

(Shrinking back)

Wilson's been talking to you. I hope you don't believe anything she ---it ain't so -----it ain't -----

Beatrice

Oh, don't make it any worse. Don't lie any more.

Molly

If she told you any -----

Beatrice

I know. I know the whole thing. Who the man is and all about it.

Molly

What man?

Beatrice

The man. I know everything. Oh don't deny it.

(Molly starts to speak)

I know every bit of the horrible truth.

Molly

Does --he - know - you - know?

Beatrice

He - will - now.

(Face to her)

Molly

(He starts to say)

Oh, don't tell him you know. Don't tell him. Let me git away. I'll get away and never see his face again. ---so help me God I will. Don't tell him you know. What good would it do? It would be - awful. I'll go where nobbdy'll ever -----don't say nothin' ----don't let nobody know ----For God's sake don't tell his wife ----

(Drops on knees)

Don't tell Mrs. Bob.

What good would it do?

Let me get

(Drops on knees)

(She falls on her knees clasping Beatrice's knees)

Beatrice

Molly!

(With a cry of horror)

Molly

(Clinging to Beatrice)

It - won't do no harm. Leave me go and don't tell it.
He's -----he's been so good to me.. I'll do anything to make it right.

(Beatrice scarcely able to breathe, stands staring as Molly clings to her knees)

He ain't like the others. I ---I ----I couldn't help it,
Miss Barrington - on my soul I couldn't ----He's made me a good girl - I ain't bad. I love him.. I love him, I tell you - I love him. I couldn't help it.

Beatrice

Don't!

(Beatrice pushes Molly so violently that Molly falls forward, her hands on the floor, and putting her face on her hands, gives up to her sobs.)

(After a tense moment, Beatrice goes quickly to C. door, and locks it. Then walks about rapidly for a moment, digging her nails into her palms - at last she speaks in low harsh tone)

Beatrice

Be quiet! Be quiet!

Molly

(Raising herself up)

What are you goin' to do?

Beatrice

Do? Do? What am I going to do?

Molly

Don't blame him. He - he said I must go. That it wasn't right for me to be here.

Beatrice

(Shaking her head and looking at Molly)

What?

Molly

Yes, he did. He -----don't blame him. He's fine. It aint hurt nobody. A man can't help it. Oh honest, Miss Barrington, I wouldn't have done it but I love him. He's so different from the others.

Beatrice
Don't say that again!

Molly
You ain't going to let him know - you know - are you? What
good would that do? Keep quiet and let me get away.
~~(On her knees)~~
His wife will never know if you don't tell.

Beatrice
Oh, don't! ~~Oh~~ - you --you miserable - ~~Oh~~ - what have I done?
Don't you know what you've done? Don't you know anything?
What are you made of?

Molly
(Sitting on floor)
I'm made of flesh and blood. He grabbed me - he kissed me -
first - right here in this room, and I love him.

Beatrice
It isn't true. It isn't true.
~~(Throws Molly to floor again)~~
(Enter IRENE C.)

Irene
Beatrice! What's the matter?

Beatrice
Nothing.
~~(Molly goes up on her knees)~~

Irene
(Detaining her with a gesture)
~~Wait.~~ What has she done?

Beatrice
Nothing.

Irene
(To Molly)
What have you done that has made my sister like this? Tell me -
because I'm going to know.
(Molly rises)

Beatrice
Molly, I forbid you to speak.

Irene
She will speak.

Beatrice
Molly, I forbid you.

Irene
She will speak. Molly go on.

Molly
Oh, I'll speak all right. I ain't afraid to tell you.
(Going closer to Irene)
I done just what you expected me to. I went back to my fella.
(Pause. Irene goes to seat and sits)
(Beatrice closes her eyes in relief. Irene sinks into the nearest chair)
She watched me and caught me. That's all. She caught me sneakin' in this morning.

Irene
(Lifting her head quickly)
This morning?
(She rises - going to Bee ----who stares at her in terror)
Is she telling me the truth?
(Beatrice tries to speak)

Molly
Of course I am. Do you think she'd lie to you? Uh? ----
(She goes above the two women)
Why should she want to lie to you about me?

Irene
Yes -----in God's name, why should you?
(Rises over L to Beatrice)
Why should you lie to me - about her?
(Taking hold of Bee)
Look at me. Swear to me that's she's telling the truth.

Beatrice
Yes -----

Molly
Of course it's the truth!

Irene
(To Molly holding Beatrice fiercely)
I don't believe you. There's something ---it's not true---
you can't look at me ----oh! What's the matter with you? Why
do you act like this?
(Shaking Beatrice)

Beatrice
Oh, you don't understand!

Irene

(backing away)
I know, I know.

It's Bob.

Beatrice

No ----

Irene

I've known it. I've known it. I don't know how ---but
I -----There's something in her eyes.

(Goes to Beatrice)

You brought her into this house.
Bee ----never -- never!

I'll never forgive you,

Beatrice

Irene -----Irene!

Irene

Send her away!
foot.

Send her away!

She's bad from head to

Beatrice

Irene have a little pity.

Irene

You brought her here and this is what' she's done.

Beatrice

(Puts arm around Irene)

She doesn't even know what she's done.

Bob

(In door C.)

What's the matter?

Irene

It doesn't seem to matter to you that your wife and your mistress
are in the same house ----but it does to me.

~~(Bob throws quick glance toward Molly and then at his~~

~~wife)~~

Bob

(Scarcely able to speak)
What is this?

Irene

Will you send her away or shall I go?

Bob

I don't know what you ----

Irene
Oh yes you do. What are you going to do?

Boh
(Speaking to Molly and going to R. of door)
Go!

(Molly goes up to door C.)

Beatrice
Oh -----

Molly
I'm goin' fast enough. I didn't ask to come. Lord knows
I didn't want to. I don't know what you call good and bad -
the way you see it - all I want is to get out. You happen to
find out one little thing and act like this when it's too late?
Are you blind as bats? Don't you live in this world? Don't
you know what's goin' on? If you feel like this about it, why
don't you stop it? If this is the worst thing your men can do
why do you let 'em? Why do you stand fer it and - and there
wouldn't be any of us.

C U R T A I N .

6
O U R S E L V E S

ACT IV.

A C T IV.

TIME:-

An hour later.

SCENE:-

Bob Barrington's Studio.

DISCOVERED:-

The stage is in darkness, with the exception of the electric light from the street, which comes faintly in from the large studio window at R. A clock strikes seven. After a moment, a key is heard turning in the door at C. back. and MOLLY cautiously opens the door and enters. She wears a small black hat and long grey coat over a shabby dress. She wears no gloves and carries her suit case of Act I. Lights. She presses the button at L. of door, and the light are turned on. Throwing the suit case on the couch at L. of door, she walks to window in a tired broken way and drags the curtains across the window. Then goes slowly across to room at R. and throwing the door open, goes back to couch and sitting unstraps her suit-case. She does all this laboriously with an occasional long trembling sigh and half sob. When the suit-case is open she folds and repacks a few pitiful articles of clothing, sometimes stopping to stare before her lost in thought. After some moments, she goes into room at L. and returns with a bright silk Japanese kimona, which she folds and puts into the suit-case. Starting back into the room she turns to look at the clock and goes to the hall-door to listen. Then starts to room again as BOB unlocks and opens the hall door. MOLLY stops L.C.

Bob
(Opening the hall door and stopping as he sees Molly)
What are you doing here?

Molly
Getting my things.

Bob
(Closes curtain and comes to her)
Well, be quick now and --
(Switches on light and goes down right of table and
taking off overcoat and throws it on table)

Molly
Oh, you're mad at me because you think I give it away. I
didn't mean to. That's what I come here to tell you. I'm
sorry. I'm so sorry I could die. I don't blame you fer
bein' mad - but I couldn't help it.

Bob
Oh, Molly -- I'm not blaming you for anything. It doesn't
matter, now --

Molly
Oh yes it does matter. I'd a had my tongue pulled out
by the roots before I'd a done it on purpose.

Bob
(Walks up and down R.)
Never mind. Don't talk about it.

Molly
Of course I know you couldn't stand up for me before the
women. But I don't see why you act like this now. I - tell
you I'm sorry --

Bob
Good heavens! Can't you understand? Oh no of course you
couldn't. I don't expect you to. Take this money and get
away.
(Takes purse from table and puts it in on table)

Molly
(Looking as if he had struck her)
You - mean - you're done with me?

Bob

Oh Molly, don't look like that. The whole thing's my fault - not yours. I've been a fool. For heaven's sake, don't make a fuss. Be sensible - be sensible and say good-bye. That will take care of you for a long time.

(Pointing to the money) - a

Molly

Do you think I'd ever come here fer money -- when your sister was -- Do you think I'd a' come to this studio if I hadn't loved you more than anything on earth,

Bob

Oh no, you didn't love me, Molly. You'll forget me in a week.
(Puts hand on easel - back towards her)

Molly

That ain't so - and you know it. You got me because you made me think you loved me - Didn't you care a little bit - Mr. Bob -- just a little?

Bob

(Looks at her sadly)
Oh Molly, you're too wise a girl to act this way.
(Sits)

Molly

Yes - I guess I'm gettin' wise, all right!
(Looking about the room)
Un! When I think of the things you've said to me here - Didn't you even care a little bit? Do you mean I was just a common -- wasn't you even stuck on me?

Bob

I've been pretty good to you. haven't I?

Molly

And you're payin' me off. Is that it?

Bob

That's it?
(Leans left elbow on knee hand on forehead)

Molly

God! How easy you say it. At first I thought I couldn't have nothin' to do with you. That it wouldn't be right -- then when you said it was, I thought well, what's the use? -- it must be, if he says so. An' I began to think it was somethin' different. It's the same old thing - now that you're through with me.

Bob

Oh Molly can't you see?

Molly

You say you've been a fool. What about me? What did I do to your sister when she was trustin' me? I wish now she'd never took me in, I wish I'd never seen nothing decent or never knew what it was like.

Bob

No, no, Molly - please don't take it this way.

Molly

Un! What difference does it make how I take it now? What difference does anything make - anyway? I thought I got hold of something kind-a' to go on - when you said you loved me - I couldn't a' looked at nobody else then no more than --

(Her voice rises hysterically)

Collin

(Knocking at the door without)

Are you there, Bob? It's Ford.

(After Molly sits Bob goes up to open door)

(Bob looks at Molly - she goes into the room at L. closing the door. Bob opens the hall door)

Go in that room - go on.

(Molly exits)

Collin

(Coming in)

The women are coming. I dashed on ahead. Irene's bound to see you. I wanted to get at you first. You've got a desperate woman to deal with, Bob. Unless you make a clean breast of it -- throw yourself in her mercy - you'll lose her -- just as sure as you're standing there. Tell her the truth - fight for her forgiveness.

Bob

Of course I'll fight for her forgiveness -- but I couldn't tell her the truth.

Collin

Why not,

Bob

She couldn't stand it. Women put too much importance on the whole thing. The girl's only been here a few times. I'm not proud of it, you know - but good heavens - I'm no saint and don't pretend to be. Irene knows that.

Collin

I've been saying just that kind of thing to Irene for the last hour - but the more I talked, the worse damned rot it seemed. Tell her you know it's an infernal, low-down thing you've done - that you're ashamed of it and will give the rest of your life to atone for it.

Bob

~~(Bitterly...)~~
Don't preach.

Collin

I could preach for the first time in my life. It's because it's you, Bob, that it knocks me. It's because it's come home to this family that it seems a different thing altogether. Irene's suffering as I didn't know a woman could. We're not worth it. Not a man on earth. It's all wrong, I tell you --- our end of it.

Bob

Do you expect me to be a snivelling hypocrite? I won't tell her stuff I don't believe.

Collin

Then believe it, man. It's the truth, by God it is. -- We can excuse ourselves forever with the same old men's excuses - but down at bottom we know the whole game's crooked.

(Goes L. C.)

Bob

This - is new - from you.

Collin

We go on bluffing about the rights of nature. Nature be damned I say. It's up to us to control it. Nothing else gets ahead of us. We don't stop at anything else we want to do - however gigantic it may be. The only thing on earth we give up to and say we can't help is the brute in us - and by heaven we pay a greater price for that -

(Pause - change tones)

- it wrecks more ruin than anything else in creation.

(Turns his back on Bob)

You're getting yours now.

Bob

(Slight pause)

Well, I'll take it. You've said enough, Ford.

Collin

(Goes to Bob and places hand on shoulder)
 Forgive me - old man. Don't lose her, Bob. Tell her the whole truth.

Bob

She'll get the truth all right - as I see it. As I believe it -- as it is.

(Collin goes up R.C.)

(He throws open the door at L.)

Come here!

(MOLLY comes out)

Collin

Good God!

(A pause)

Get her away. They'll be here any minute.

(He starts for hall door)

Bob

Hold on. She'll stay here.

Collin

Are you off your head?

Molly

Let me go!

(Starts to go)

Bob

You'll stay right here, I say.

Collin

What the devil do you mean? Do you want Irene to find her hers?

Bob

Now you keep out of this. I'll see this through in my own way.

Collin

You can't do a thing like that! .

Molly

Oh let me go, please!

(There is a knock at the hall door)

(Knock)

Bob

Open the door!

(Collin hesitates)

Open it!

(Collin opens the door)

(IRENE enters followed by BEATRICE. Irene stands as if turned to stone. Beatrice stifles a cry. Molly slinks away below window at L. Collin closes the door)

(A pause)

Go in there - you two. I want to speak to Irene!

(Beatrice goes in L. followed by Collin who closes the door)

Molly

It ain't what you think.

Bob

Be quiet.

(Molly starts to go)

And stay there.

(Go Irene)

I found her here - and kept her when Collin came. I -- I'm going to try - it's hard for men and women to talk to each other honestly about this thing.

Irene

Oh - let's be honest. Don't be afraid.

Bob

Look at that girl. Look at her.

(Molly comes slowly down and sits on lower seat down L.)

If it were some one I could be in love with. I could understand your caring. But she -- and what she represents means nothing personal to a man ---

Irene

Go on.

Bob

This girl hasn't anything more to do with you and me than the wind that blows.

Irene

Oh! If this has nothing to do with you and me - then what has? What are we supposed to be - to each other? Just what - should I expect of you? Tell me. I want to know.

Bob

You're my wife -- that sets you aside from every other woman on earth. I love you. I'm more sorry and ashamed of this than I can ever tell you - but oh, dear girl - it - there's nothing personal in it. If - if you could only see it that way - you - you wouldn't care - so much. It takes nothing from you - doesn't mean disloyalty. It doesn't exist so far as you and I are concerned.

(Molly gradually moves down and sits on stool crushed)
Don't think I don't know all that - and just how it seems to you. But Irene, dear - I - my God - I love you. I'm sorry. It only happened. It's over. Try to forgive me.

Irene

Is that all?

Bob

(Slight pause. Bob goes down R.)

Oh Irene. Oh - it all comes down to the same old thing -- men are men and women are women. Be a little - don't be too hard on me, Irene - try to understand. Oh, my dear girl, -- we're not the same, I tell you -- and we're not to blame for the way we're made. You stand there, a cold-blooded saint and condemn me - because you don't understand.

Irene

That's not so.

Bob

(Goes to Irene)

Oh yes it is. Do you think for a minute if you had the same amount of animal passion in your make-up that I have - you'd blame me so - for this? You don't know. Your pulses beat evenly and slowly. You don't know what a man resists. You don't understand but you ought to try to. You're good because you don't want to be anything else - you couldn't if you tried.

(Goes down R.)

Irene

Don't be so mistaken. Don't count so much on the slow, even pulses of a woman - don't be so sure of the cool blood in her veins. I've kept myself for you - because I married you. I've made you the one man - not because no one else has ever stirred me - not because I'm not just as strong and healthy an animal as you are - but because of you - you. If you and I had begun the same - as boy and girl - if I'd taken the same liberties with my life that you've taken with yours, I'd be just as you are now. If you had lived as I have with the same ideals and control, the same dreams of what you might be to one woman - of what your children would be -

(Bob groans.)

you'd be just as I am now. I've stifled and choked and hidden

my fears about you. I've cackled the same stuff about a man's nature that most women do -- but I know now they're all, lies. They've come home to me. - They're beating me in the face. They're lies. You're unclean - as I would be if I had done what you have. You've defiled yourself. You've been a beast not because it was necessary, but because you let yourself. You're not my husband. I should despise myself if I ever called you that again.

(Bob turns to face her)

Bob

Irene! Irene!

Irene

Don't touch me! I loathe you. Don't come near me!

Bob

Irene - Irene, forgive me.

Irene

No - no - no! I can't.

Bob

Irene I love you.

Irene

We can't go on.

Bob

Above anything else on earth.

Irene

It would always be the same.

Bob

Try to forgive me?

Irene

I can't, I can't, I can't.

(~~Goes up to door in hysterics.~~ Beatrice and Collin enter from L. 2.)

Beatrice

Irene. Irene.

Molly

Oh wait! I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't mean to hurt you. I didn't know what I done was as bad as this. Don't let two people like you break your hearts for a thing like me.

~~(Sits on settee)~~

(Beatrice motions to Collin - who advances and takes Irene out. He closes the door)

Collin

(Following Irene)

Come home to her Bob.

(He goes out closing the door)

Bob

(To Beatrice who is looking at Molly)

This is what you've done with your confounded ideas.

~~(Sits on settee)~~

Beatrice

There's only one thing to blame me for - and that's for driving that girl out of the house - for not defending her before you all - and telling her then that I did not hold her responsible for all that's happened - but you entirely.

Molly

Do you mean that, Miss Barrington?

Beatrice

I do.

(Placing arms about Molly's shoulder)

Molly

That means more than all you ever said to me put together. I never thought I was a real human being to you before. I always thought you was just experimenting on me. Do you think that don't put something new into me.

Beatrice

Come with me now Molly! I'm going to take you back to Miss Carrow! for tonight.

Molly

Only fer tonight then - Miss Barrington. I can't stay shut up no more. I want to stand on my own feet. I want to be alone and feel safe. I want to trust myself. Do you know what I mean?

Beatrice

Yes Molly.

Molly

If I can't go straight by myself now - you never can make me.

You said I ought to have something to say to other girls -
well I guess I've got it now all right. I'd like to tell
every girl on earth what I know now.

(She takes up the suit-case and opening the door
~~turns to Bob~~)

C U R T A I N